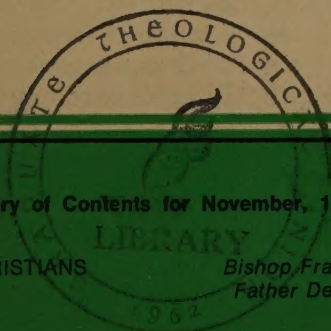


# Christian Order



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are asked to be so kind as to renew their subscriptions *immediately* on receipt of reminder notices. This way our too-small staff, which gets progressively overworked as circulation continues to rise, is saved an *enormous* amount of extra labour; very, very much more than most readers realise, I imagine. And the saving in money is very great too, particularly where readers abroad are concerned. Just think of the cost of sending three reminders by air-mail to Australia (39p in all) or U.S.A. (33p in all) or countries similarly distanced from the U.K. This way, the drain on our finances is heavily increased—sometimes to the point where I think it could break us. Overseas readers could stop this drain *at once* if they would be so very kind as to renew *at once* on the first reminder. Is this, really, very much to ask? I would be so grateful if you would be so kind as to do this.

And if you wish not to renew, but cancel your subscription, will you do this on the first reminder, please? If you do not, we simply go on throwing money away on postage. Please help us here.

There are some renewals outstanding from September and October. Would those concerned please contact me right away please? Thank you so much.

—Paul Crane, S.J.

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Please let us know two or three weeks ahead if possible and please send us both new and old addresses. Thank you.

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# Christian Order

EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

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## Marxists and Christians

THE EDITOR

IN a good many parts of the world—particularly and most vividly, perhaps, in countries of Central and South America and in the Philippines, an Asiatic country—the Catholic Church has found herself increasingly in a position of conflict with what may be termed harsh dictatorships of the Right, often of a military nature.

The conflict has occurred because the regimes in question are without regard for the poor, who are the victims of injustice expressed in the shape of what are very often appalling and degrading social conditions, which have been long thrust on them to no small extent by the casual ruthlessness of an employing and landlord upper class, nominally Christian and which has enriched itself very often at their expense. The system which has been largely instrumental in reducing the poor in these countries to what are often the extremes of degradation may be described no unfairly as one of exploiting capitalism. Against it and its exponents the Church in these countries within the past few years has bravely set its face in support of elementary justice, so long denied to the poor. In so doing, she has not merely found herself in conflict with an exploiting and often, largely Catholic upper-class, which lends itself to harsh dictatorship aimed at shoring up an unjust status quo. She has found herself technically and uneasily on the same side as Marxist Groups and Liberation Fronts infiltrated by Marxists and, in a good many cases, unwittingly



serving as so many covers for ultimate Marxist design in the shape of a take-over of the country concerned. The effect of such a take-over, with its imposition of totalitarian collectivism, would be to make the state of the poor still worse than their present condition under exploiting capitalism. At the same time, the Church cannot remain quiet—as she has too long remained quiet—in the face of such exploitation.

The problems arising from this extremely difficult situation are obvious. They must, however, be faced; but only after thought that is principled and, above all, coupled with intensely prayerful reflection. There is no easy solution and it is rendered no easier by the cry of “Marxist” that is labelled against those trying to work at it and for the poor by well-to-do Catholic exploiters. We publish this month a deeply moving account given by the Jesuit Bishop Francisco Claver of the Prelature of Malabaylay in the Philippines of his continuing attempt, along with his people, to meet this acute problem. It is, at one and the same time, simply, yet deeply affecting. There is no wild romanticism here, no fake or bent theology created in support of his outlook. He has all he needs in the teaching of Christ and His Church. Bishop Claver’s motivation is non-ideological, profoundly spiritual (in the real sense of that much maligned word) and yet, at the same time, realistically concrete in its practical and immediate expression. Reading what he has to say one feels that it is he and men like him who will carry the Church through this kind of situation.

Side by side with Bishop Claver’s story are reflexions on Marxism and the Church set down with great clarity by Father Dennis Corrigan, a diocesan priest in charge of the parish of Salawagan in the secular Province of Bukidnon in the Philippines, which is coterminous with the Prelature of Malabaylay of which Francisco Claver, S.J. is Bishop.

For the benefit of readers we would point out that the NDF (National Democratic Front) is a grouping of left opposition movements of which the Communist Party of the Philippines appears to be the leading element. The NPA (New People’s Army) is a maoist-inspired opposition force against the present Government (the Dictatorship of President Marcos) in the Philippines.

## 1: CONVERSATIONS WITH MARXISTS

# Reflections

BISHOP FRANCISCO CLAVER, S.J.

### 1: BACKGROUND

OVER the past few years I have had occasion to talk with people in the Leftist Underground, with priests and religious who either work with them or are in complete sympathy with their aims and goals.

Uppermost in my mind in all these talks was the nagging question: Why do otherwise convinced Christians fall for the Marxist line?

I started out with the hypothesis that most do so because they do not find in conventional Christianity (the socially uninvolved kind, that is) a real outlet for their idealism, for the concretization of their dreams for a more socially just society. The hypothesis, despite all the talks and meetings (they add up, all told, to some dozen sessions), is still largely untested—or at least not sufficiently tested for me to arrive at firmer conclusions.

The original question is really nothing else but an attempt to understand the thinking of Marxists. The attempt was by no means merely an intellectual exercise. For on the answer depended our whole pastoral approach to the problem of *critical collaboration* with Leftist-inspired movements for reform. Basically, then, the question was the same as the one we have been asking about the Church's approach to totalitarian governments of the Right.

The following notes are by no means an attempt to reconstruct our conversations but to put in stark relief the questioning that still goes on in our minds about Marxism and the program and philosophy, drawn from it, for the restructuring of society. Our misgivings, to be candid about it, still persist. The headings used in our scheme of discussion and questioning may seem to be arbitrary and haphazard. They probably are. But they have become strangely, in tightly intermeshing fashion, the very specific points of issue in our grappling with the entire question of justice.

and human rights, and the Marxist approach to it. And they are used here then simply as springboards to deeper and wider questing into the essence of the problem.

## 2: ISSUES

### (A) *Dialogue*

Both sides must be open to change, learning, modification. But is this the reality—on the part of the National Democratic Front or, for that matter, of the Church? Even when dialogue takes place in praxis (practice) and not merely in theoretical discussions, is there a possibility that there will be shifts in positions—and shifts made not only for tactical or strategic reasons but in actual philosophies, ideologies, aims and purposes, definitions?

### (B) *The Good of the People*

This good is paramount in the thinking of both the NDF and Progressive Christians. But who defines that good? Presumably, the people. But will they be allowed to think for themselves? The rhetoric is filled with terms like *back-sliding* and revisionism. But from whose standpoint are these terms to be used and understood? I can conceive of a situation where the people will decide “back-sliding” is good for them at a given time, for a given situation, even for good. Will this be allowed? The usual answer given by Marxists is, yes, such “revisionism” will at times be allowed—but only for tactical reasons.

### (C) *Structural Analysis*

Can Marxist structural analysis be divorced from ideology? Marxists will say, no, not completely; there are certain givens in Marxist ideology that cannot be surrendered, like class warfare, the good of the people, armed struggle, etc. But Marxist structural analysis is only one way of dissecting society for study. There are many ways each valid according to one's premises (ideology). Hence our fundamental question: The Marxist manner of analysis so rigid that facts and people are made to conform to ideological *givens* rather than the other way around? The whole aim of structural analysis, it seems, is to lead people to the very ideology that it springs up from.



#### (D) *Ideology*

There are common elements in NDF ideology and that of "Progressive Christians"—as the more socially conscious and active portions of the Church are termed by the Left. Cooperation is possible in practice, especially on these common elements. But there is the grating suspicion that there is always something beyond, say, the agreement on the paramountcy of the *people's good*—the Revolution, the Party, some further end. (We probably can say the same of the Church.) That "something beyond" must be deeply scrutinized.

#### (E) *Religion*

Religion has no place in classic Marxism. At best it is only a passing phase; at worst, the "opium of the people." It will disappear, so the philosophy goes, not necessarily immediately, but eventually as the Revolution runs its course. Neo-Marxists seem to be ambivalent about the classic Marxist acceptance of the nature of religion—or at least they seem to be more amenable to the possibility that religion (though not institutional religion) *can* be a continuing fact in the lives of people.

In the new order, there will be freedom of religion. But what guarantee is there that this will happen? Promises are not enough. The only thing we can go on now is the actual experience of religion in Marxist-dominated countries. What happened there will not happen here?

#### (F) *The Role of Religion*

What we are doing now—i.e. being critical of the unjust social order—is an essential role of religion as we see it. It is a role that is good now under a capitalistic dictatorship. It will be a role that will still be good—and will have to be played—even under a socialistic regime. I doubt that the prophetic role of religion will be tolerated.

#### (G) *Instrumentalization*

We cannot shake off the feeling that all this talk of uniting in a common front is only for the furthering of the aims of the Party rather than for the good of the people. The good is always subservient to the Party's definition of it—definition that like methodology and programs must neces-



essarily include the admittedly unchanging elements of Marxist ideology. This *being-used-ness*—manipulation, simply—is something we would resent and oppose as Christians, be it by Church, Government, Party.

#### (H) *Cooperation*

When cooperation is talked about, it is always in terms of the Church cooperating with the NPA or the NDF. Why not the other way around too? The usual answer is that this would be endangering the Church. (Presumably *our* cooperation with them does not?) But the point is that, in any cooperative effort, the shots are still called by the Party. Real cooperation is not possible in such a set-up. Everything is always looked at in terms of tactics and strategies, of furthering the struggle, the Revolution. Hence there is no escaping the conclusion that the interests of the Party and not really those of the people are the real aim of the cooperation sought.

#### (I) *Infiltration*

The very term makes me wary of the Movement. If the Church, other institutions, are really working for the people's good, why is it still necessary to infiltrate them? The reason is because there is only one way of working for the people's good—and that is the Marxist way? All others are wrong, or at least merely self-interested? I am of the opinion that priests and nuns who are Marxists should not use their position in the Church for Party aims. It would be more honest for them to go UG\*. To Marxists this is "impractical". The present approach is the only thing to do now—for tactical reasons. Again, the shadow of instrumentalization.

#### *Summary*

In general the Marxists I spoke with tried to show that all my objections were not completely valid. The NDF is open to change, dialogue, freedom of religion, etc. But we look always for *actual proof* that our fears are baseless—even now in the cooperative effort, if there is going to be such a thing, to work for the good of the people. There are no signs in evidence of that proof.

Underground

Our conversations often took a philosophical turn, e.g. we went into the problem of knowing, the nature of objective truth, the relativity of knowledge, theories and hypotheses and their validation, etc.

They were rather honest discussions—but always I felt I kept coming up against a wall when I pressed for ultimate answers: “What, then, after the revolution? Who make the final decisions? In whom will real power be vested in a people’s democracy?”

The Party and its establishment in power *were* the ultimate end. Everything else, everybody else—people, Church, the common good—all were subordinated to that one end. Is this conclusion simply a bias of our “reactionary” mentality?

What is *our* position? Our alternative?

Even though we say it is not our task as Church to evolve particular ideologies, the fact is the NDF looks at us—they call us “Progressive Christians”—as having one.

What is this *ideology* of ours — or approach (to avoid bogging down in semantics)?

For we do have an approach to the very same problem that are the very *raison d'être* of the NDF, of the whole Marxist movement in fact. But what is it? And why does it not “grab” people enough to elicit the same kind of commitment and dedication that confirmed Marxists have to the Party or Revolution—or whatever it is that ignites them into a total giving of themselves?

We lack a “mystique”? Or if we say we have one and can even identify it, it does not have the same pulling power as the Marxist one? It is a point we Christians must seriously ponder. For the fact is there is a growing number of priests and religious, other Christians, who—even in the context of “Progressive Christianity”—are going more and more for a strictly Marxist option. Why?

Perhaps only *they* can answer the question. Until their answer is forthcoming, we have to look into our approach (or lack of it), scrutinize our premises, examine their viability. We may be proving Marx right in his judgement on the irrelevancy of religion—because we have become irrelevant ourselves.

# MARXISM AND THE CHURCH

FATHER DENNIS CORRIGAN

## 1: THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE STATE

### *Marxism*

The Revolution takes place for the sake of the people. It is waged for the liberation of man from alienation and all forms of oppression. But the Revolution is simply a transitional stage; a higher phase—that of Communism—will develop. The proletariat will become the nation. Thus class distinctions and the need for class struggle will disappear. The opposition of manual and mental labor, the conflict between the city and rural sectors will disappear. The State will wither away, because its only function is to hold down the exploited class. Since the proletariat will have become the nation, they will need no State.

In a second phase in which all traces of capitalism will be eliminated, society will proceed on new principles. Men will cease to govern men. Man will administer things. Public authority will replace State powers. The principles of society will then become: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs".

That at least is the theory! In the concrete historical development of Marxism there has been an identification of State and society, of party and State. This has led to a stifling socialist centralism and a ruthless suppression of individual needs—with promises of future happiness for all through increased production figures. The increased production is achieved through harsh work norms. The uniqueness of the individual is ultimately despised. To talk of it is bourgeois liberalism and excessive personalism". Even the suppression of human rights and concrete suffering can be allowed for the sake of goals to be achieved. These attitudes have been clearly manifest in talks with Party-leaders and trade-union organizers.

### *The Church*

Man is unique: the image of God, created for freedom, knowledge and love. All things exist for man; nothing is above him—not the State, nor the economy, not political



strategies or tactics; no Party or ideology—but God alone who gives meaning to his life, future and all his activity. The economy exists for man, not man for the economy (*Populorum Progressio*). The State is relative. It can never demand absolute loyalty; this is given to Christ alone.

## 2: ALIENATION

### *Marxism*

Marxism speaks eloquently of man's alienation and the increasing misery of the workers. Their misery is not simply the physical misery of their lives, but also the psychological deprivation arising from their alienation. For Marx, alienation could exist, and even deepen, despite improvement in material standards of living. In the process of work, i.e. the molding and changing of nature outside himself, man molds and changes himself. The more his work develops the more his individuality develops. But with the rise of new modes of production (the Industrial Revolution) work becomes a duty and an obsession. Men become alienated from the process of their work itself since work is imposed on them by social conditions. It is not self-fulfilling but a denial of self: they exhaust themselves physically and debase themselves mentally—becoming like machines.

In work, the laborer gives over to the owners the control of his activity. It is work for someone else. Work results in the creation of private property, the product of the worker belongs to another no matter how much the worker empties himself into this product. Private property thus creates further alienation. Alienation, working together with economic exploitation, leads to increasing misery, and so, of course, to the formation of the proletariat as a class for itself.

### *The Church*

With the Marxist, Catholic social teaching is sensitive to the plight of the workers, as is manifest from early documents like *Rerum Novarum* up to more recent writings such as *Mater et Magistra*, *Pacem in Terris* and *Populorum Progressio*. The Church sees man's alienation as rising from deeper sources than mere economic and social forces. It raises questions about the very meaning of life, of sin, suffering and death.

The overcoming of alienation and man's ultimate fulfillment does not lie in work, militant solidarity or dialogic existence, but in the joy and security of the knowledge that he is loved by God and that the brokenness of his life with its frustration, despair and death, is healed and overcome in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### 3: FREEDOM

#### *Marxism*

The economic basis of a society determines its social structure as a whole as well as the psychology of the people within it. Political, religious and legal institutions, as well as the ideas, images and ideologies through which men understand themselves and the world, are simply reflections of the economic base of society. The economic base determines the superstructure (institutional and ideological forms).

Although men make their own history, given the circumstances of the economic base, the way they make it and the direction it takes are determined. The course of history is structurally limited to the point of being *inevitable*. Thus Marx refuses to discuss the future or to persuade men of new moral goals—the proletariat will inevitably reach them. Despite all this, the process needs to be carried forward by revolution; and so Mao says there can be no revolution without a revolutionary theory. Hence the need for a revolutionary Party to guide the course of the Revolution.

In actual conversation with Marxist-ideologues, it became clear that true freedom is freedom to obey the Party line, to carry out its orders, to implement its strategies and tactics, to have the "correct line" and "correct thought", which is always the Party-line and the Party's thought. Freedom does not mean "bourgeois liberalism", which seems to include placing truth, personal loyalties, ties with family and friends, kindness, mercy and faith above the party and the exigencies of the Revolution.

#### *The Church*

The Christian acknowledges the many forces, conscious and unconscious, that buffet man and even diminish his freedom, sometimes to the point of volitional helplessness.

At the same time we declare our belief in personal responsibility and individual guilt, in a fundamental option for good or evil that can determine the whole direction of man's life, in a new freedom given in Christ: freedom from fear and guilt, freedom from superstition and idolatry (money, self-interest, the will to dominate), freedom from others, freedom to love and to hope in God and so in man.

All this is a far cry from the Marxist conceptions. My own experience has been that the more I became involved with the movement in terms of seminars for indoctrination and the carrying out of "political tasks", the less free I became to think, or act, or even speak like a human being. One is always conscious of revisionism, back-sliding and deviating from the correct (Party) line.

#### 4: TRUTH

##### *Marxism*

Precisely because Party goals, strategies and tactics come before all personal loyalties and cultural values (such as gratitude, friendship, sincerity) the truth becomes a dispensable item: "The only truth is that which serves the people" (read Party!). "The only morality is that which serves the people" (read also Party!). "Of course you can use people to help the Revolution, what's wrong with that!" And after one seminar in '73: "*Maayo ang response sa mga tawo. Gigamit si Cristo!*" (The response of the people is good. Christ is used!).

Again and again over 10 years, since the very beginning of the Marxist-Dialogue, I have experienced a fundamental duplicity in the Marxists and cadres with whom I have worked. I have come across constant dishonesty in cadres claiming to be personal friends: smiling faces and approving words for work-style and projects coupled with secret and bitter attacks on the Church and (especially foreign) priests; cadres accepting money and asking assistance in problems (sometimes entailing considerable risk to personal safety for those helping), at the same time organizing against priests and the Church in the barrios. The example could be multiplied ad nauseam. One thing that strikes me is how un-Filipino and un-gospel the whole thing is.



## The Church

"The truth will make you free". The sacramentality of the Church and man is to express its being and inner life in words and actions that effect what is signified: life, love, justice, peace, freedom, joy. The face of God and the power of the Good News are seen in the transparency of a life lived in sacrifice and unconditional commitment to truth.

By contrast, in the Underground, there is a basic attitude of mistrust even for fellow cadres. One should not get too close, too involved with friends. One may have to denounce or kill them later. One should not tell people, even fellow cadres, too much about one's work—it militates against security. Thus the use of aliases, codes, etc. Examples of this duplicity appear in the NDF manifestos. The document claims to be the programme for a United Front, but is couched completely in a Marxist framework with Party policy and jargon. It leaves little doubt as to who is *really* in control of the NDF.

In the April 24, 1973 Manifesto the NDF attacks the "constitutional authoritarianism" of the "fascist dictatorship" of Marcos. They list "horrible crimes" against the sovereign people: attacks on democracy, terror, intimidation, assassinations, mass arrests, mass detention, torture, blackmail, extortion, forced mass-evacuations, etc. All of these methods have been used in the name of the Party and the Revolution in Russia and the Soviet Bloc, in China, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Some have also been used in the Philippines, e.g., by the Sparrows: assassination units of the NPA. What do they say about this? In the same manifesto they talk of the "struggle raging throughout the archipelago". This is contrary to all historical facts.

In the more recent April 24, 1977 Manifesto there is a significant increase in the number of sections referring to the right of all national and democratic parties to participate in the coalition. No party or clique should monopolize. Freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, movement, religious belief and the right to due process are stressed, especially freedom of religious belief. Belief in religious freedom is affirmed, "*but through persuasive means* we must turn aside from every type of obscurantism

and escapism". This, no doubt, spells the doom of any religious activity that is not deemed useful by the Party.

## 5: THE ENEMY: CLASS AND CLASS-STRUGGLE THE PROLETARIAT AS A CLASS-FOR-ITSELF

### *Marxism*

Class struggle rather than harmony —“natural” or otherwise—is the normal and inevitable condition in capitalist society. This conflict is basic, i.e., irremediable within the system: if one interest is fulfilled, the other cannot be. Within capitalist society, the workers cannot escape their repressive conditions by winning legal or political rights and privileges. While unions and mass labor organisations are training grounds for revolution, they are *not* a guarantee of socialism. The class struggle between owners and workers is a social, political and psychological reflection of objective economic conflicts. History is thus a dialectic, a series of contradictions and their resolutions.

History is also a struggle between classes. In the light of the Marxist theories of class warfare and class analysis, certain people emerge as *the Enemy*. If you are not of the oppressed, then you must be an oppressor. There is no neutral condition.

In the current Philippine context, all military, police, government officials, even “non-progressive” priests and religious, big businessmen, foreign capitalists, can be seen as “*the Enemy*”. Generally Marxist cadres see reality in persons in black and white categories; there are few greys. I remember one poignant story from an NPA member. He was examining the dead bodies of Philippine army troops killed in an encounter with their squad. One of the victims was a young man about his own age, an “Enemy”, because he was wearing a P.A. uniform. The NPA soldier discovered letters in the pocket of the dead trooper—letters to his mother telling her not to worry about him and explaining that he had joined the Philippine army because they were poor, and his mother, a widow, had no support. For him, temporarily at least, the class myth was exploded; a man cannot be simply classified as an enemy because he has a certain income or property, or is located within the military sector.

## The Church

For the Gospel there are no barriers left dividing man. All are one in Christ. Human persons can no longer be divided on the basis of religion, race, culture, sex, politics, class, wealth, or power. Jesus Christ celebrated banquets in which the most diverse classes of persons were to be found: national traitors, zealot revolutionaries, women (second class citizens of that time), prostitutes, businessmen, members of religious sects. His table-fellowship was open to all without limits.

All men are brothers because they have one Father: God who makes his sun shine and rain fall on good and bad alike. The radical concept of "brotherhood" proposed by Jesus overturned many of the social relations of his day and created an equality unparalleled in history.

By contrast, the dictatorship of one class, one party, the liquidation and suppression of opponents and counter-revolutionaries, the Marxist theory of no rights and no tolerance for the class enemy goes deeply against the Gospel spirit of equality in brotherhood and love. Similarly, the Marxists' elitist privileged knowledge ("higher consciousness") and their dogmatic, partisan thinking actually effect the *de*-humanizing of man.

## 6: THE MARGINALIZED PEOPLE

### Marxism

All the criticism of the class-struggle elaborated above can be applied also to the Marxist view of the social misfits, the *bugoys*, the rejects of the community. "The slum proletariat" which is formed by the *putrefaction* of the lowest strata of the old society is to some extent entangled in the movement of a proletarian revolution. On the whole, however, thanks to their conditions of life, the members of the slum proletariat are far more apt to become the venal tools of the forces of reaction.

### The Church

As stated in the previous section, the Church has a mission to the oppressed. This does not simply mean the economically hard-up, but *all* who for any reason, be it race, religion, culture, sex, or even social pathology, stand in need of the Gospel's healing power.



## 7: MATERIALISM

### *Marxist*

Matter is all. Legal relations as well as forms of State cannot be understood by themselves nor explained by the so-called general progress of the human mind, but are rooted in the material conditions of life. The religious temperament itself is a social product. All social life is essentially practical. All the mysteries which urge theory into mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice (theses from Feuerbach).

The highest point to which contemplative materialism can attain (i.e., that materialism that does not comprehend nature as practical activity) is the contemplation of separate individuals and of civil society. The standpoint of the old materialism is civil society. The standpoint of the new materialism is human society or *social* humanity. Even theology, therefore, and concepts of God are rooted in the concrete economic base and politico-cultural superstructures of the various ages.

### *The Church*

There is such a thing as Christian materialism, if by this we mean the goodness of creation and the use of the world to promote human development. In more recent writings on the theology of creation, man is seen as immersed in his story and also creating it; he must relate to his environment sympathetically and realize that he is dependent on it for his life and thus should care for it, etc.

The world is good. Through the concrete world of men and relationships we come to know God. But, it is materialism that acknowledges an *Origin*, a *Creator* and an *open* future transcending the categories of space and time. Christian materialism does not acknowledge the world as a closed system. It is open to the transcendent future: God.

## 8: RELIGION

### *Marxism*

Marxism offers a total explanation of reality in purely historical-material terms. Matter includes the "material" relationships of the forces of production, the dialectical nature of history, class struggle, etc. Religion is a cultural anachronism, the tool of the oppressor class, the opium of

the people, the cry of the oppressed creature. It is doomed to wither away and die as the new man of the revolution emerges.

Religion is a fraud and is irrelevant to the solving of man's problems. But it can be tolerated and even used for tactical purposes in the service of the revolution. But only progressive religious and progressive religion can be tolerated even for a marriage of convenience. The recent political theology and the theology of liberation have provided excellent vehicles for Marxist tactical propaganda based, as they are, on a Marxist analysis of the social problem.

In the Philippines there is a definite strategy for infiltration and use of the religious sector to promote Party goals and assist in "cultural" propaganda favorable to the Revolution. Ultimately, there is no place for the Church in a socialist society. Ideologues laughed and become vague when pressed on these points. Feuerbach is the highest point of philosophy. There is no mystery in the Gospel or in Christ. To maintain faith is essentially childish or escapist. Atheism is in this age a human desideratum. In any case, religion after the Revolution will only be tolerated insofar as it can help State programmes. If it continues to exercise its critical, prophetic function, it will simply be suppressed.

Atheism is required for full consistency between a Party candidate's theory and practice. If a person uses Marxist methodology but does not accept historical materialism, i.e., the *whole* Marxist ideology, he is considered inconsistent. A candidate Party member may continue as a believer for two years. If he wishes to become a fully fledged Party member, the decision about atheism becomes imperative. In conversations with cadres engaged in guerilla warfare it emerged that often atheism was reached as a practical necessity in situations where killing and violence were required as a way of life. The praxis determined the theory. In a way, it was simply a suppression of conscience rather than an intellectual conviction—at least at the grass-roots level.

Similarly, at the grass-roots level, many young people join the movement through motives stemming from idealism or love of country. Many NPA soldiers are simply farmers who often retain their belief in God and the

Church. As the higher levels of organization and Party membership are reached, the more atheism appears as an intellectual conviction or the fruit of philosophical research. In some cases, rejection of the Church and God was a traumatic emotional reaction to the institutional Church's callous apathy and, in some cases, hypocritical oppression of squatters and the poor. The "Church" here was not the Bukidnon Church but that of more conservative Churches in the Visayas and Luzon. Some ex-religious, including seminarians, were among the Communists with whom I talked.

### *The Church*

Some Christians have understood Marxism in terms of its "humanism": ethical, economic, communal, scientific. For them it does not necessarily exclude belief in God. They accept a Christian-Marxism. But precisely because a man is a Christian, he must ask himself to what is his prior commitment addressed: faith in Marx or faith in Christ? For the Christian, faith in Jesus Christ and not scientific teleology forms the decisive criterion on questions like technology, organization, competition, manipulation.

There are some who, accepting a strictly horizontal and reductionist interpretation of the Gospel, reduce it to a disguised secular humanism, a symbolic explanation of the elemental forces at work in man's psyche and social relations. Such people accept Marxism easily, sometimes remaining in the church, and even the priesthood, without any faith or transcendent hope. This participation in the life of the Church is for purely tactical purposes: It has everything to do with the needs of the Party and little to do with Christ.

For complete faithfulness to its historical origins, faith must remain open to the cross and resurrection, not simply seen as human processes but as liberating forces opening up history for man and locating his ultimate fulfilment in God. Faith in Jesus means a fundamental trust that man is much more than any politics, sociology or economics suggests. It seems to me that finally for "Christian-Marxists" the choice comes down to the Party or the Gospel. The hyphen between Christian and Marxist (as strictly inter-



preted!) cannot be sustained. As one American bishop remarked: "It is not even a question of bastardy. The beast cannot exist!"

## 9: CHANGE

### *Marxism*

The dynamic of historical change is the conflict between the forces of production and the relations of production. The class struggle between owners and workers is a social, political and psychological reflection of objective economic conflicts. The "laws of dialectics" are as follows: (a) If things change enough, they become different, qualitatively, from what they were to begin with; (b) One thing grows out of another and then comes into conflict with it; (c) History thus proceeds by a series of conflicts and resolutions rather than merely by minute and gradual changes. These contradictions as expressed in the Marxist system indicate a *total* break with the existing order. The new arises from the ashes of the old. Thus intolerance for all "gradualism, reformism, revisionism, palliative programs"—for anything that could reduce the revolution's boiling point.

This appears to me as the reason why some young religious attracted by the Marxist vision and having accepted the need for constant *tension* between societal systems as the condition for authentic change, criticize their fellow workers for paternalism and palliative programs (cooperatives, loan programs, etc.) since these programs do not promote sufficient tension.

### *The Church*

The Christian diverges from the Marxist view of change. Marx interprets history as a steady process (inevitable) by which humanity produces itself. The end of the class struggle will bring a change in man's moral nature. He will produce according to his capacities and demand no more than his needs. The Christian, however, is convinced that to change history for the good, man must first himself be changed. He of course acknowledges with the Marxist that there must be a synthesis of practice and belief—orthodoxy and orthopraxis—for a real movement to change. He also agrees with Marx that the point is to change the world not simply to contemplate it, as did the philosophers.

From the outset, the Christian's religion involves the notion of radical change. The call to repent—METANOIA—is a challenge to realize a fundamental change in the structures of human life. Through his faith and acceptance of the Good News, man becomes a *new* creature. This is not simply a private, personal change of heart. Man's conversion cannot be understood apart from the social and political situation in which he lives. It requires a change in the domestic, social and political conditions of human existence. Like a classless society, justification is a *social* event which establishes a solidarity between those formerly estranged and creates one people, "the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16).

Thus emerge—the theology of total human development; of creation; of the church as catalyst, its prophetic, critical function; of the Church's hope. To hope is to act, to change the face of the earth as sign and token of the final consummation. This change envisioned by the Church is evolutionary organic growth, not a destructive, negative unleashing of forces that can only tear down but contain no power to rebuild. The change envisioned by the Church is for the sake of man. Man can never be used or destroyed as a tool for the change.

## 10: VIOLENCE

### *Marxism*

As indicated in the previous section the elements of struggle, warfare, dialectics are built into the Marxist philosophy of change. Concretely, this expresses itself in armed struggle. Anything less than armed revolution is an inadequate instrument to bring change. Armed struggle is invoked as a principle and condition of change. Executions of the "enemy" are necessary and logical. They may be required by "security". They are punishment for those who have opposed or damaged the progress of the Revolution.

### *The Church*

While Christian metanoia does not seem to call for an unconditional renunciation of physical force, such force can never be used as a means to personal or class advantage and aggrandizement. However, military and other forms of

violence may remain, in a given situation, the only possible way towards social justice and freedom. Christian faith sees violence as regrettable, but leaves it open as a measure to be employed in extreme circumstances. Its use constitutes an "ethic of distress".

Absolute pacifism is an ideal and prophetic way that may be taken up by some. It is the most human solution. This "pacifism" does not imply spineless weakness, passivity or acceptance of unjust or oppressive structures. It can also be understood positively and actively as with Ghandi, M. L. King, Camara and others. The fragility of all progress should be accepted.

## 11: "SERVE THE PEOPLE"

### *Marxism*

This famous slogan of Mao Tse Tung has been used widely and by different groups. "The people" are: the proletariat, the oppressed, those in need of economic, political and cultural liberation.

### *The Church*

The Church exists not simply for herself but for humanity (Bonhoeffer). She also wants to serve the people. The people for the Church also include the oppressed, but its service cannot be for one class alone. The Church is for all men. It is a Church of saints and sinners, a net of good fish and bad, a field of wheat and weeds growing together. There are many forms of oppression ranging from physical destitution to the apathy and boredom of Western consumer society. The Church exists to serve all, to liberate all. The good news must be preached to the poor — especially to them — but it is not their exclusive property. *All* have a right to hear it, and to experience it, in the many concrete forms of service and caring.

One contradiction frequently observed in Marxists is that they are very good at shouting "serve the people", but when confronted with live human beings, destitute and in need of life's necessities, they are inclined to become deaf, dumb and blind! *Men* are ignored so that "the people" may be served. To provide medicine for a sick child, to bury paupers, to give small charity loans, to engage in other small

programs as cooperatives or cottage industries, is to be guilty of "paternalism" and "reformism". But we cannot escape the fact that the Christian ethic demands the service of *this concrete* neighbor who is nearest to me. If I refuse him I also refuse Christ!

## 12: PROPERTY

### *Marxism*

Property as a source of income is the objective criterion of class: within capitalism the two basic classes are the owners and the workers.

### *The Church*

Man is steward of the good things of earth. The earth belongs to *all* not only to the rich. Private property is not an absolute right. Some property is needed for individuals and families in order to develop as human persons. Possession of property need not be the sign of oppression. Socialization and responsible use of property for the common good are also Christian social requirements.

## 13: THE FUTURE

### *Marxism*

As stated in previous sections (Individual and State, Freedom) Marx refused to prophesy regarding the nature of post-capitalistic society. Only utopians and dreamers draw up detailed blueprints of the future. On the other hand, the course of history is structurally limited to the point of being *inevitable*. Man will certainly arrive at the goal of the classless society and moral metamorphosis. The Revolution will inevitably reach its term in the liberation of man. This future is totally this worldly. It is material.

### *The Church*

Even the Church, while proclaiming a future open to God (thus against a closed history), does not equate the fulness of the Kingdom and the state of the last generation. The final historical outcome of the human quest is by no means certain. Evil, natural and moral, remains a force to be reckoned with. History does not move inevitably toward perfection but, does, ultimately, despite all setbacks and



sufferings, cascade into the Glory of the One God. In terms of their historical hopes, Marxists seem to have a greater certainty and (naive?) optimism than do Christians.

## 14: CONCLUSION

### *Cooperation?*

For this author, the differences between Christianity and Marxism outweigh the similarities. Apart from all theories of man, society, change, the future, it comes down to a choice between the Party or the Gospel, Marx or Christ.

### *Why the Attraction for "Progressive Christians?"*

Marxism offers a simple concrete analysis of society and its problems. It proposes a clear and definite program to solve these problems. Because it is an ideology and a total interpretation of reality and because it has a political apparatus (Party), it can coerce its followers.

The Gospel is not an ideology: its effect is indirect; it is not coercive. It aims at the spiritualizing and humanizing of all aspects of man's life: structures, values, goals, etc. The impact of the Gospel is indirect. It operates on society through renewed human beings who in turn renew and humanize corrupt structures and relationships. The Church does not provide a blueprint for social change but supports or, at times, initiates genuine movements towards total human development.

Thus the work of the Church in effecting more just social structures may be much slower than Party methods, but ultimately, because it does not force renewal artificially by violent external means, its labors are more respectful of the nature of real human growth and change. None of this is likely to sound appealing to those who in their deep frustration with the many failures of the institutional Church have abandoned their hope in its message and turned their eyes to a more immediate (and superficial) salvation through Marx. The failure of the Church in many places to witness to justice is one reason why many young Christians have turned to Marxism as a solution.

But, at this time, there are also other people, mostly very young, idealistic but politically naive, who, while working with the Communists, maintain a hope in the Gospel and the Church. It is a matter of urgency to ask them now: Do

they really understand Marxism as a way of life and as the ground of meaning for their world, or do they simply see it as a methodology to work towards a more just society? It is a matter of urgency to ask them: Do they realize that there are fundamental points of conflict between Marxism and the Gospel view of man and change, service and justice, hope and the meaning of the human project?

If they have truly understood Marx and the Party, I doubt whether they will invest all of themselves in that one system. Ultimately, the Marxist choice is too conservative as an approach to change when compared to the radical newness of all things demanded by the Gospel.

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### 3: THEORY AND PRACTICE BEYOND IDEOLOGY

#### WHAT TO DO

BISHOP FRANCISCO CLAVER

#### 1: STARTING POINT

##### (A) *History*

We do not believe in pre-determined history, and precisely for this reason, we work with our people to chart our own course. Hence our whole thrust towards the creating of *discerning communities* by the people themselves: critical and aware, allowing for plurality in options of thought and action yet unified in a common concern for Gospel-inspired communities, acting, cooperating, able and ready at all times to learn and grow. And all this they must do in and with the Spirit.

##### (B) *Man*

Our general apostolate in Bukidnon has sometimes been dismissed as being too man-centred, not God-Centred, because of our stress on human dignity, justice, equitable economic development, genuine participation in political decisions. We are not bothered by the charge. For our apostolate has consciously been in the context of the good of the community but always in terms of Gospel values.

We do not deny the primacy of the spiritual in our work. But we look at man in his totality both as a spiritual and a physical being, and we try to respond to his needs precisely as a totality. We make no false dychotomy between his duties and obligations as a citizen and as a Christian. Hence we also stress what in other places is looked down upon as a purely "sacramental" ministry. This is an essential aspect of our work. But it must be exercised completely immersed in, not divorced from, life in the here and now.

## 2: GOAL

The goal we work for is not an earthly paradise, a once-and-for-all utopia, but community: people striving together, working together, suffering together, towards building themselves up into an ever more human and Christian community.

But we start with the reality, where people are at: the *here and now* with all its negative aspects, its problems, its oppressions and injustices; with all its positive aspects too, its advances and helps for more human living, its available solutions.

The goal is not ours to set as institutional Church, although we are fully aware we do have a definite role to play in the process of goal-setting, of vision-formation. To the proximate goals that our people set for themselves, it is our constant task to put before them always the finality of the parousia. Without this we would be mere social workers, engaged in a merely secular task, not preachers of the Gospel and all that the term implies.

## 3: PROCESS

The liberating struggle, as we have it in Bukidnon, is centered on such efforts as our people take to free themselves of what they see in present-day Philippine society as hindrances towards the creation of a more human condition. In the neo-colonial capitalistic system that obtains in the province—a perfect mirror of the wider national picture—wealth and power and all their emoluments and advantages are weighted heavily on the side of an economic and political élite (ranchers, loggers, high government officials, big landowners, corporate and independent businessmen)

as against the powerless but much more numerous "masses" (small farmers, tenants, farm workers, cultural minorities, small business).

How correct the lopsidedness of such a society—and the built-in injustice of that lopsidedness? The situation is essentially one of violence and selfishness, institutionalized to a degree unimaginable to people who prefer to shut themselves off from its conflictive nature. Freedoms are not going to be won by a stroke of a pen, by an edict, by a decree. Nor simply by talking about them, least of all by closing one's eyes to them. They will have to be fought for—by the very people who do not have them. Hence the struggle. Uphill, drawn-out, but, we trust, non-violent.

#### 4: VEHICLE OF LIBERATION

In a society in which leadership is traditionally vested in the wealthy and powerful, the leadership needed in the struggle for liberation will not come from those who enjoy the wealth—and wield the power—of their established position. It has to come from the weak, the powerless, the disenfranchized. In a word, the poor.

In Bukidnon these are the 80% or more of the province's population who live their lives on a bare subsistence level. The decision to work with them to the fullest extent possible was taken consciously by the clergy and religious of the Prelature from the very start of the setting up of Malaybalay as a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The Asian Bishops Meeting of 1970 and its ringing declaration on the Church of the Poor and working for justice gave us the strong impetus we needed for the direction already taken. The minimum understanding we could give the term "Church of the Poor" was for us, the official Church, to be at least on the side of the poor: in the concrete this means promoting their best interests, cooperating with them in their aspirations for a more human life, always within the demands of social justice and charity, of the Gospel of Christ.

#### 5: TARGET

From the very start, the Church's action with the poor has been interpreted as a deliberate attempt to provoke a vicious class war—poor against rich, tenant against land-



ord, employee against employer. The charge of Communism has been flung freely against bishop, priests and religious, lay workers in the Church. No amount of preaching or explanation will put the message across to the economically and politically established, in short the rich, that it is not against them as such that our action with the poor is directed but against the unjust structure which holds both them and the poor in its grip. And we are inviting all to do something about it, to have at least some concern about the suffering it induces, to look into its roots, and together work out a solution in justice and charity: to do this because it is a Christian task that is deeply rooted in faith. The rich, because they have obligations to the poor in justice and not only in charity. The poor, because they are in the common guilt by passively allowing themselves to be used and exploited.

A great part of our problem has been our own identification in the past with the established class. Catholic education, a proud tradition in the Philippines, has tended to cater to the needs of the more affluent people of our communities. So too has another great tradition of service through our hospitals. Our parish apostolate is not completely free of the problem either. We have tended to concentrate our ministry in the *poblacions* to the neglect of the *barrios*, to cater for the "spiritual" needs of the better-off segments even our rural communities.

Any shift in this arrangement will necessarily result in conflict. The conflict, unavoidable and necessary, is an essential aspect of the general struggle against the injustice of our society's structures.

## 6: THE STRUGGLE

### *Means*

If our struggling is not against people, however oppressed they may be (knowingly or unknowingly), but against institutionalized injustice, then the first step in the liberating process is for both oppressors and oppressed to become aware of the injustice built into their social relationships. This is our conscientization approach.

In Bukidnon this has meant primarily educating for justice. Practically all Prelature-wide programs and apos-

tolates have been—and still are—mobilized for this task: the Social Action Center with its legal department, an usury loan program, its various economic development (through cooperatives) projects; the Institute of Catechesis with its communitarian and environmental approach to the teaching of religion; the Communications Media Center (radio and press) in its crusading against local violations of justice and its strong championing of the restoration of basic freedoms lost under martial law; the family life apostolate in its stress on enriching familial relations within the context of community obligations and duties; the Cultural Communities program with its prime object of instilling in dispirited people a sense of their cultural integrity; our leadership program and its efforts to develop a dialogical group of community leaders at the grassroots level; our health program with its promoting of community health and social medicine in neglected areas; our schools in their efforts to become an integral part of the communities in which they are located.

These “apostolates” taken as a whole are people-centered to quite an extraordinary degree and it is this quality that has forged them into variant but nonetheless cohesive vehicles of not only developing an awareness, among the people, of their life problems as communities, but in many places of also instilling in them a readiness and a will to act in concert for the common good.

A further step in the liberation struggle of the poor is the organizing of themselves in support of a common cause. This is by no means an easy matter in a greatly factitious and polarized society such as we have. The difficulty is compounded by martial law restrictions against free association and critical speech, by the general fear brought on by these restrictions and the easy way in which charges of subversion and rebellion are thrown around precisely to stop people into inaction.

Our conscientizing and organizing efforts have been tirelessly with the poor. Earlier attempts targeted at the rich through the KC (Knights of Columbanus), CWL (Catholic Women's League), other elitist groups in the Church, ended miserably: they were not willing to listen. (It is much easier to talk to them of charity than of justice, to encourage

ge their image of benevolent almsgivers than to speak of their obligations to the poor in justice). The present approach has led to conflict precisely because it threatens old structures. We feel that what we could not accomplish with the rich by directly dealing with them is beginning to sink into their consciousness now. Opposition and resentment have been their initial reactions but the more thoughtful are beginning to see the point of the whole struggle. Some positive responses are beginning to appear. We trust this is sign of real change—at least in attitudes.

### 8) *The Arena*

The striving for liberation in Bukidnon has centered on justice. In practice this has meant demanding that the civil and human rights of the poor be respected by the government and the rich. The attempt to help the poor achieve justice before the law has resulted in open confrontation with the Establishment and, because of this, the accusation most often hurled at the Church is that it has been meddling in something that is not its province at all, to wit, politics.

There is no running away from the fact that the whole question of human rights has political implications. But by the same token, there is no doubt either that it does have very much to do with the economic aspects of life, the religious, the social and cultural, with all aspects of life in fact. For the simple truth is; when we speak of promoting "more human life", we necessarily must deal with life in all its aspects, with the parts as well as with the whole.

Hence, in a very real sense, it does not matter which aspect of human living we attack first. And we are not bothered by ideologies which postulate that one part determines all the others, one part dominates all the others. This may well be true, and attacking what one considers the root problem first may conceivably be the pragmatic approach indicated in a given situation. But the fact remains that when we deal with human life, in all its complexity, in all its inter-relatedness, we cannot act from a pre-determined blueprint that must by all means be executed down to the last detail. The variability of human decisions, the possibility of multiple interpretations of the human reality,

diverse viewpoints and criteria of judging—these and many other variables enter the picture. And manipulating or coercing people into a blueprint whether of the Left, of the Right, or of the Center, is against our whole Christian sense of what is right.

All this strongly bolsters, we believe, our basic stance that in any community, under any form of government, basic human rights must remain inviolable. Our zeroing in on the area of human rights as the locus of the struggle for liberation is hence dictated by its essential character. It also is dictated by the prophetic role the Church must play in any situation of injustice.

### (C) *Methods*

Armed struggle as an ordinary method of bringing about change in unjust structures is not Christian. Neither is the passive, fatalistic endurance of injustice. Between these two extremes is an area of human activity that is as wide as human imagination and ingenuity choose to make it. To bring these into full play, people must be given the utmost freedom to think and decide and act, not only as individuals but, just as importantly, as collectivities, as groups, as communities. And if they are not easily given this freedom (as we are under martial law today), they must assert it by taking it—but peacefully. The peaceful claiming and asserting of rights will not take place unless people are conscious of their rights, and, beyond mere consciousness, are ready and willing to exercise them for the common good—even to the point of civil disobedience when these rights are arbitrarily curtailed by unjust laws or denied by unjust structures.

In Bukidnon this line of thinking has led to an understanding and appreciation, in the formation of small Christian communities, of the need for people to organize themselves into groups that can, when the necessity arises, exert pressure for change within the social system. The gradualism of the process is not attractive to those who seek immediate and drastic solutions to the ills of our society. But we believe it is more human—and in the end more substantial and lasting in its results. As long, that is, as it is done with a critical sense.



## (D) *Violence*

If, as we said earlier, we live in a society in which violence is built into the social order, is it a Christian response to counter violence with violence? It is the temptation of frustration and despair. Of impatient zeal too. And we in Bukidnon have not been immune from its strong fascination.

But we know deep down in our guts that the way of violence is not the answer. We can accept on a theoretical level the Church's ordinary stand on the moral use of force and violence under very restricted conditions. We can accept the necessity of violence when those conditions are fulfilled. And we can accept the possibility of "charisms for violence" of conscientious Christians who are convinced that the cause they are fighting for at *this time and place* is the only answer to an otherwise impossible life-condition.

But accepting all this, we pose these hard questions to ourselves: How do we prevent, once we start on the way of violence, its escalation into a general holocaust, one in which all too often the innocent become the sacrificial victims? How do we counteract the hatreds that must inevitably arise once the forces of violence are let loose in an orgy of purges and counter-purges in the name of social reform? Is the aftermath of hatred and endemic conflict, bloody, ruthless, only an imaginative invention of anti-evolutionaries?

We do not doubt experts and technocrats, ideologues and evolutionaries, have answers to these questions in their development blueprints and political ideologies. We don't. So we go to the people.

The people we speak of are not people in the abstract. They are flesh-and-blood-and-guts people. The poor, the forgotten, the oppressed of Bukidnon in all manner of structured injustice, the weak, the defenceless. It would be the cruelest joke to talk to them of taking up arms to protest injustice. For the arms of the poor are knives, sticks, clubs, home-made guns at the best. And we would be asking them to pit these against the sophisticated arms of the rich—the whole arsenal of modern weaponry. The very imbalance puts in black contrast what we mean by institutionalized injustice and violence. It also points to an answer.

For if our people are weak and defenseless, this is, paradoxically, their greatest strength. Their very vulnerability is their main weapon in the struggle. But only in the context of non-violence. Militant and fearless, organized, programmed, directed by themselves and by none other.

Is this political naivete of the worst kind? Perhaps it is. But our interest as Church is not in countering political astuteness with political astuteness. It is rather in how man can become more man in and with the light of the Gospel. Violence as an ordinary means of humanization is not within our Christian purview. And even as an extraordinary means within the restricted limits set forth by our theology we have deep reservations about it as an instrument of social reform *taking into full account the actual realities of our people.*

## 7: AGENTS OF CHANGE

We make much of the notion of the Church as the People of God. It is a rich concept. But what does it really mean? How does it translate into life?

For those of us in direct pastoral work here in Bukidnon it has meant involvement in the life problems of our people. The formula has been "building up Christian Communities". In practice this has meant going to the grass-roots to the *barrios* and *sitios*, wherever we have people with a distinct identity as a community of faith. That identity is more often than not, at least on the surface, centered on the *barrio* or *sitio capela* (village chapel) and the annual celebration of a fiesta. And the pastoral question has been: Can the faith-life of our people go beyond ritual religious practice, beyond the four walls of the chapel, spilling over into life itself, entering into its problems of social, political, economic, other life relationships? Can faith infuse Christian values and viewpoints into those relationships—structures of society, that is—for greater humanization.

It is a large question. The institutional Church has a definite role in the searching for an answer to the question. So do the laity, the rank and file of Church members. Especially the laity: the people. So we are back to the potent notion of the Church as people.

The theological—as well as pastoral—implications of the Church as People of God are many and profound. One such implication is that people are the architects of their salvation, be it of this world or of the other. The statement sounds banal. It is. But then so is the bald statement that in actual practice it is not the people who are the real arbiters in decisions concerning their common weal. It is always something above them—or at least separate from them: some élite body, some higher power, call it the hierarchy, the technocracy, the military, the political machine, big business, the Party. That quality of *aboveness*, of separateness of élite decision-makers—to put it another way—is part of our general problem: how bring it about so that both “massa” and élite *equally* and *genuinely* share in the responsibility and burden of decision-making for the good of society?

For the moment, in Bukidnon, the question is focused on the “massa”: how to make their voice count in the present élitist system of decision-making? The answering of the question *is* the very process of and struggle for liberation. And it is completely in the hands of our people. It has to be if we are serious about them being the agents of their own liberation.

## 8: CULTURE

Cultures are particular ways of being human. And because they do not exist apart from people but in truth are part of their inner core, constituting in fact to a large extent their very identity as a people, respect for their dignity as human beings must necessarily include respect for their culture too. Hence any system of thought geared towards action, any restructuring of the social order based on a thought system, any philosophy of people action, all must take into consideration—and treat with great respect—“the way of being human” of a people.

Stating this general principle, we are by no means suggesting that cultures are sacrosanct and perfect in themselves and should not be “tampered” with at all. But we do say that people have a right to live according to their accepted way of being human and no power on earth, not the Church, not the government, not the Party, may bring

about change in people, in their way of thinking and living, in their way of being human, *by force or manipulation or deceit*. In other words, as we indicated in the preceding section, people are and must be the architects of their own welfare. But this welfare must be understood in terms of their cultural definitions, present outlooks and understandings.

Hence our strong insistence that blueprints for social reform, systems of thought and action, ideologies and even theologies, must be open to modification and change when applied to particular life conditions, to already existent "ways of being human". If this is *heresy*, practical or intellectual or whatever, we in Bukidnon readily plead guilty to it.

## 9: SUMMARY

Fighting ideological battles is not our forte in Bukidnon. Simply because we do not believe in ideologies as the end-all and be-all of all action for improving the social order, for working with our people to help make their hard lot more bearable. Ideologies can be useful, true, at times even necessary, but only to the extent that they are subservient to a wider and greater end—the common good of the people.

It is for this reason that our main focus has been the building up of people through small Christian communities. The term sounds most innocuous. It certainly is not in Bukidnon (as in many parts of Mindanao). To the government it is equivalent with sedition and rebellion, with all sorts of crimes against the State. So we must be doing something right!

For the Christian, community means people thinking for themselves—and hence intolerant of any form of thought control. It means people talking with one another—hence against anything that will curtail their right to free speech and criticism of wrong-doing. It means people acting in concert with one another for their common good—hence unaccepting of any impositions that limit their freedom to associate with one another in common cause. It means people who are concerned with one another, who share burdens with one another, who care for justice and human



dignity, who stand up together for anything that makes people's lives more human.

This is not theory. This is, in different ways, in different degrees, hard praxis in many a community in Bukidnon. The possibility is there, then, for a more human society. Under present frustrating conditions in our country and province, that possibility is enough. And given the choice between totalitarian systems of the Right and of the Left, that possibility is alternative enough.

Hence we are not troubled overmuch whether, in our unswerving aim to be with our people in their deepest aspirations for a more human life, we are used either by the Right or by the Left or by whatever power, political or economic, is in the ascendancy. The danger of being used and manipulated by interested groups will always be there—it is a given of our human condition. We will resist manipulation, strive hard to overcome it, but the fact of manipulation itself will not stop us from doing what we believe is right, what we are convinced must be done at any cost. The Church's mission to preach the Gospel goes straight to the heart of our involvement with people, with their hopes and fears, with their very lives. This involvement is of the essence of the supreme loyalty we owe Christ—and to none other. It is in this same involvement that we work out with our people what it means to be human and Christian in the Philippines today. It is a task that goes beyond ideology—any ideology. Because its impelling force is faith in the Lord Jesus.

## REFLECTION

### BISHOP FRANCISCO CLAVER

"The great temptation for those of us who want to take the idea of the Church of the Poor seriously is probably this, that we sooner or later begin to think for the poor. I wonder if we are not falling headlong into that temptation here: we think up solutions, elaborate them even to the point of creating hard and fast ideologies out of them, propose them as programs of action to be slavishly executed. We know best what is good for others. We think from above, as it were; we hardly give a thought to the thinking

and action that must concurrently go on from 'below'. This is not to say we should stop thinking up solutions, refining them, acting on them. Without doubt many of the solutions we propose will jive with those worked out from 'below'.

But I wonder nonetheless if the notion of the Church of the Poor does not consist essentially of letting the poor think for themselves, of according them in truth the dignity of thinking human beings, of supporting them in the action they themselves define as leading to their common good—not only in this problem of hunger but in all others. They must be brought into the process of seeking and evolving solutions. For if these solutions are to be based on justice—and justice is based on human dignity, then we simply have to pay more than lip-service to the dignity of the suffering and the hungry. The greatest injustice done them may well be their exclusion from the thinking world of men. They have something to say that not all the experts and technocrats, however right they may be in their analytical and theoretical schemes can ever articulate for them. They also have a part to play that no one can substitute for, much less define for them. This confidence in people, this trust in their basic good sense, this acceptance of them on a deeply human level—this, to my mind, is the fundamental attitude we must start with. Only with this attitude will we, I believe, begin to think with them, rather than for them; a truly liberating process. A creative process too, evoking into being a genuine Church of the Poor". (41st Eucharistic Congress, Philadelphia, USA, 1976).

The following Declaration from a group of Chicago Catholics, highlights, we believe, a striking post-conciliar paradox; viz., that the Second Vatican Council, which worked so hard to energize rightful lay involvement in the world, has seen the Catholic laity elbowed out of their rightful field of lay action in the post-conciliar years by an all-pervading clerical bureaucracy within the Church, coupled with clerical and religious usurpation of what is the Catholic layman's rightful role. The Declaration, which we reproduce below, goes to the heart of a serious matter.

# A Chicago Declaration of Christian Concern

## GROUP OF CHICAGO CATHOLICS

THE signers of this Declaration are members of the Catholic Community in Chicago.

### *A One-time Compelling Vision*

For decades, the Church in Chicago nurtured a compelling vision of lay Christians in society. The vision they had was eventually accepted and celebrated by the Second Vatican Council. That same vision produced national movements and networks which generated a dynamic lay leadership. It attracted priests who saw their ministry as arousing the laity to the pursuit of justice and freedom; who served the laity without manipulating them.

Shall we passively accept that period of history as completely over, and with it the vision that proved to be so creative? While many in the Church exhaust their energies arguing internal issues, albeit important ones, such as the ordination of women and a married clergy, the laity who spend most of their time and energy in the professional and occupational world appear to have been deserted.

"Without a vision, the people shall perish". Who now sustains lay persons as they meet the daily challenges of their job and profession—the arena in which questions of justice and peace are really located? Where are the movements and organizations supporting the young toward a Christian maturity? Where are the priests sufficiently self-assured in their own identity and faith that they can devote themselves to energizing lay leaders committed to reforming the structures of society?

We wait impatiently for a new prophecy, a new word that can once again stir the laity to see the grandeur of the Christian vision for man in society and move priests to galvanize lay persons in their secular-religious role.

We think that this new prophecy should retrieve, at least in part, the best insights of Vatican II. It was Vatican II that broadened our understanding of the Church. It rejected the notion that Church is to be identified exclusively with hierarchical roles—such as bishop and priest. The Church is as present to the world in the ordinary roles of lay Christians as it is in the ecclesiastical roles of bishop and priest, though the styles differ.

### *Thrust of Vatican II*

Vatican II did identify man's hopes for social justice and world peace with the Church's saving mission. The salvation of the world is no longer to be construed as applying only to individual persons but embraces all the institutions of society. The Church is present to the world in the striving of the laity to transform the world of political, economic and social institutions. The clergy minister so that the laity will exercise their family, neighborly, and occupational roles mindful of their Christian responsibility. The thrust of Vatican II is unmistakable:

What specifically characterizes the laity is their secular nature. It is true that those in holy orders can at times be engaged in secular activities, and even have a secular profession. But they are, by reason of their particular vocation, especially and professedly ordained to the sacred ministry. Similarly, by their state in life, religious give splendid and striking testimony that the world can not be transformed and offered to God without the



spirit of the beatitudes. But the laity, by their special vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and all of secular professions and occupations. They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven. Today they are called by God, that by exercising their proper function, and led by the spirit of the Gospel, they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven. In this way they may make Christ known to others, especially by the testimony of a life resplendent in faith, hope and charity. Therefore, since they are tightly bound up in all types of temporal affairs, it is their special task to order and to throw light upon these affairs in such a way that they may be made and grow according to Christ to the praise of the creator and redeemer. (*Constitution of the Church*, para. 31).

### *Devaluation of the Laity's Unique Task*

Although the teaching of Vatican II on the ministry of the laity is forceful and represents one of the Council's most notable achievements, in recent years it seems to have all but vanished from the consciousness and agendas of many sectors within the Church.

It is our experience that a wholesome and significant movement within the Church — the involvement of lay people in many Church ministries — has led to a devaluation of the unique ministry of lay men and women. The tendency has been to see lay ministry as involvement in some church related activity, e.g. religious education, pastoral care for the sick and elderly, or readers in church on Sunday. Thus lay ministry is seen as the laity's participation in work traditionally assigned to priests or sisters.

We recognize the new opportunities opened up to the laity to become deacons, but believe that in the long run such programs will be a disaster if they create the impression that only in such fashion do the laity mainly participate in the mission of the Church. We note that our misgivings are shared by the Apostolic Delegate to the United States,

Archbishop Jean Jadot, who commented recently, "I believe in the laity. And the laity as laity. I was very, very impressed, I must say, by my experiences in Africa and my closeness and friendliness with some African bishops who don't want to hear about a permanent diaconate. They say it will kill the laity in the Church. It will kill the laity in the Church because it will reinforce the conviction already existing that to work for the Church you must be ordained".

Our own reaction to the Detroit "Call to Action" conference reflects a similar ambivalence. Without a doubt, it was historic, precedent-setting in its conception, in its consultative process, in helping all levels of the Church listen to each other and in facing challenges to growth affecting the inner life of the Church. But devoting, as it did, so much of its time to the internal affairs of the Church, the conference did not sufficiently illuminate the broader mission of the Church to the world and the indispensable role of lay Christians in carrying out that mission.

During the last decade especially, many priests have acted as if the primary responsibility in the Church for uprooting injustice, ending wars and defending human rights rested with them as ordained ministers. As a result they bypassed the laity to pursue social causes on their own rather than enabling lay Christians to shoulder their own responsibility. These priests and religious have sought to impose their own agendas for the world upon the laity. Indeed, if in the past the Church has suffered from a tendency to clericalism on the right, it may now face the threat of a revived clericalism—on the left.

### *Depreciation of the Laity's Ordinary Social Role*

*We also note with concern the steady depreciation, during the past decade, of the ordinary social roles through which the laity serve and act upon the world. The impression is often created that one can work for justice and peace only by stepping outside of these ordinary roles as a businessman, as a major, as a factory worker, as a professional in the State Department, or as an active union member and thus that one can change the system only as an "outsider" to the society and the system.*

Such ideas clearly depart from the mainstream of Catholic social thought which regards the advance of social justice as essentially the service performed within one's professional and occupational milieu. The almost exclusive preoccupation with the role of the "outsider" as the model of social action can only distract the laity from the apostolic potential that lies at the core of their professional and occupational lives.

### *Church Bureaucracy Stifles Lay Involvement*

Although we do not hold them up as models adequate to present-day needs, we do note with regret the decline and, too often, the demise of those organizations and networks of the recent past whose task it was to inspire and support the laity in their vocation to the world through their professional and occupational lives. We have in mind such organizations as The National Catholic Social Action Conference, the National Conference of Christian Employers and Managers, the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, the National Council of Catholic Nurses, Young Christian Students, Young Christian Workers, and the Catholic Council on Working Life.

Although concerns for justice and peace are now built into Church bureaucracy more so than when such organizations flourished, there is no evidence that such bureaucratization has led to further involvement of lay Christians. As a matter of fact, the disappearance of organizations like the above, and our failure to replace them, may have resulted in the loss of a generation of lay leadership.

### *Politicizing the Gospel*

As various secular ideologies, including communism, socialism and liberalism, each in turn, fail to live up to their promise to transform radically the human condition, some Christians seek to convert religion and the Gospel itself into another political ideology. Although we also yearn for a new heaven and a new earth, we insist that the Gospel of Jesus Christ by itself reveals no political or economic program to bring this about. Direct appeals to the Gospel in order to justify specific solutions to social problems, whether domestic or international, are really a

betrayal of the Gospel. The Good News calling for peace, justice and freedom needs to be mediated through the prism of lay experience, political wisdom and technical expertise. Christian social thought is a sophisticated body of social wisdom which attempts such a mediation, supplying the middle ground between the Gospel on the one hand and the concrete decisions which Christians make on the other, on their own responsibility in their everyday life.

### *Call for Re-examination of Present Trends*

In conclusion, we address these words of hope and deep concern to the members of the Church throughout the nation as well as to members of the Church in Chicago. We invite them to associate themselves with this declaration. We prayerfully anticipate that our words and theirs will prompt a re-examination of present tendencies in the Church and that out of such an examination will emerge a new sense of direction, a new agenda.

In the last analysis, the Church speaks to and acts upon the world through her laity. Without a dynamic laity conscious of its personal ministry to the world, the Church, in effect, does not speak or act. No amount of social action by priests and religious can ever be an adequate substitute for enhancing lay responsibility. The absence of lay initiative can only take us down the road to clericalism. We are deeply concerned that so little energy is devoted to encouraging and arousing lay responsibility for the world. The Church must constantly be reformed, but we fear that the almost obsessive preoccupation with the Church's structure and processes has diverted attention from the essential question: reform for what purpose? It would be one of the great ironies of history if the era of Vatican II which opened the windows of the Church to the world were to close with a Church turned in upon herself.



# Letters to Lucifer : 7

R. S.

Dullflat Industrial Estate,  
Pinfield, Buckfordshire.

From I, Archliar Nicholas, to my Sovereign Lord, Lucifer.  
Greetings, my Lord :

I think your Lordship took a very wise decision in instructing Me to leave Paradise Island (apart from a routine check) and proceed here to supervise the building of the new 'shared church'. I find Myself ideally placed for the work here, as it is quite the ugliest industrial estate I have ever seen. It was designed by Creep & Philistine, who have also been chosen as architects for the shared church. The "dedication", by the way, is to be "All Christian Martyrs".

I lost no time in attending the meeting concerning the proposed church. I have seen the plans, and it is to be a hideous structure in yellow brick, completely flat and featureless, and in fact as little like a church as I can persuade them to make it. It will look very much like the outside walls of the nearby Bingo Hall. A Mr. Samuel Prune is providing the cash, and he is an absolutely perfect tool for our purposes; he knows all about building, and is a great one for getting value for money. He is all for broom-cupboards and general utility; it does not in the least matter to him if the building materials are ugly, as long as they are cheap. I intend, by the way, to see to it that the broom cupboard is next to the confessional, with similar doors : it will be gratifying to your Lordship to see these pathetic little humans popping through the wrong door and finding a mop instead of a priest. The New Form of Penance did harm, but not perhaps as much as We had anticipated, so this small entertainment will serve to compensate.

I shall hope to leave as soon as this depressing dump is ready for Father Aloysius Thinktank, when he arrives from the States, and with your Lordship's permission, I intend to take a leisured look at the great Cathedrals of the world;

I shall need to get Dullflat Estate out of My system. I will report to my Lord as the building progresses, attending meetings. I have in the meantime taken up residence in the home of Mr. Samuel Prune (the carpets! — I prefer the attics).

While at the convent on Paradise Island, having very little to do, I read through back-numbers of the *Underworld Review*. Congratulations must surely go to my old colleague Brimstone Senior, who it seems is responsible for getting Them to accept lay ministers of Communion. To see lay people on the Sanctuary, beside the Enemy's priest with a ciborium in their hands! No-one before Vatican dreamed of such a thing, nor is it in the least needed, or indeed wanted, now, but it is a blow at the Enemy's heart and the credit must go to Brimstone. I hope to go to the Investiture when he is decorated. Are tails optional?

Congratulations also to You, my Lord: I read that among other triumphs You were responsible for fixing things so that most Catholics have no missal or prayer book, and are compelled to use those rustling little leaflets — a constant distraction and a great waste of money. There is also the "reformed" (lovely word) Calendar. I watched with delight those unbearable saints going down in a sea of ferias. So much for their sufferings: why couldn't they enjoy themselves like Us? These unfortunate humans do not want the "reforms", they *do* want the saints, but who cares what they want? Not You and I my Lord; not You and I! A further report follows.

ARCHLIAR NICHOLAS.

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## A PRAYER

Lord  
Make me  
Truly precious  
In my own eyes.

—FRANK RICKARDS

The tragedy of the Church at present is found not only in her inability to bring the whole Christ to the young and the poor; but in her failure to realise—now, in the post-conciliar, as, formerly, in the pre-conciliar world—that this is what she must do, if men and women today are not to pass her by as no more than an irrelevant antique.

CURRENT COMMENT

# The Forgotten Factor 2 : Tragedy and Hope

THE EDITOR

THE present tragedy of the Church, as presented in the pages of Malachi Martin's book, reviewed last month, is found not only in the failure of the Church to cast aside reliance on temporal power and temporal involvement with its entanglements in order to maintain her institutional position, when her reliance ought to be on God alone. Her failure is found also and more poignantly in her seeming inability to realise that this is what she simply must do if the world—and particularly its young and rising generation—is not to pass her by, leaving her on the sidelines as no more than a faded antique, to be valued, not for what she means to men of the present day; but as no more than a part of past history that has gone now forever.

## *The Old Game*

This failure to realise the one thing necessary is brought out brilliantly by Martin in the addresses to their Brother Cardinals made by the heads of different factions within the Conclave. All are conscious that the Church is at crisis-point; all love the Church, but, with one exception, the remedies proposed by each, however opposed in particulars, are in terms common to them all; those of temporal preservation. Instead of concentrating on the one

thing necessary, which is the presentation without condition or compromise of the whole Christ to a world that longs for Him, almost despite itself, and the discarding of temporal alignment and the ensuing entanglement which such alignment entails; instead of this, the minds of the Cardinal Electors are concentrated on the old game. They are set on manoeuvre in the interests of association with the temporal power of the Establishment best calculated, as each sees it, to protect the spiritual mission of the Church. History has shown, however, that, inevitably, this kind of protection kills or cripples the Church's spiritual mission, the very thing it was designed so mistakenly, to protect. Tragically, however, this lesson of history goes unrecognised by Martin's papal electors, as it goes unrecognised in so many quarters of the Church today. Like Martin's Cardinals in *The Final Conclave* they remain intent on the politics of manoeuvre, when they should be concentrating on the discarding of temporal entanglements so that Christ and His Gospel Message, entrusted to the Church He founded should be presented whole and entire to the world without fear or favour and irrespective of the consequences. Because of their failure to see this, the deliberations of Martin's Cardinal-Electors are rendered inevitably, in the Conclave's first stages, quite sterile.

The sterility goes under the deadly shock that comes with the revelation of trafficking between one of the factions in the Conclave and outside Communist Power. Shattered by this shock, reduced to virtual mental disintegration, they are summoned to what they should do by the piercing sincerity of the young African Cardinal, Azande. His message goes home. We leave them proceeding to vote not for a Church seeking alignment with temporal Power for the sake of institutional preservation, but for a Church that discards it and all that goes with it in order that, at last, as never before, it may be free to give Christ as He truly is to a world that needs Him as never before.

### *The Real Problem is By-passed*

Readers will not be unaware of the varied stances adopted by Martin's Cardinal Electors in the opening stages of *The Final Conclave* and before the shock of revealed out-

de pressure, coupled with the African Cardinal's piercing words, brings them to their senses. In one form or another they have been running through what we call the post-conciliar Church for the past twelve years. All have this in common in that they are seeking to retain or attain a position, based on alignment with temporal Power, which they see as *sufficing in itself* to ensure the safety of the *Institutional Church*, along with the truth of its Gospel message, which is far too often no more than an afterthought in their minds. This is not to say that there may not be reasonably good points contained in any or all forms of temporal alignment advocated by men within the Church. What all advocates share in common, however, is the basic error of thinking that temporal position, with regard to the Church, is *all*; that, once this has been secured through appropriate diplomatic and other manoeuvre, the rest will follow. In their eyes alignment is what counts. What they do not see is that alignment of itself—whether be with the past or the future—remains alignment and nothing more. The real problem, thereby, is not merely *by-passed*. Its solution is blocked. For the problem is not one of position, but of carrying Christ to men's hearts; and this is just what alignment with temporal Power—Conservative, Communist or what you will—is incapable of ensuring. On the contrary, what it will ensure is the giving, not of the whole Christ, but of Christ with reservations, rendered necessary by the need the Church feels under to retain the favour of the temporal Establishment with which it is aligned, so that its safety as an institution may be preserved.

### *Failure in the Past*

Thus it was, for example, that for fourteen hundred years the institution of slavery went without official condemnation by the Church; that workers had the labour squeezed out of them and, in many parts of the Third World, continue to have it sweated out of them without official ecclesiastical rebuke; that clergy and religious were grooved in their formative years to fit slot-wise into an increasingly secularised society, to tolerate, at the very least, its secular values; which meant tolerating its many injustices; never confronting them, for fear of rocking the ecclesias-



tical boat. Thus it was that the poor never had the whole of Christ preached to them. They were attended to in the time of need by not unkindly clerical professionals whose chief and only purpose seemed to the poor to be that of keeping in being a machine whose main object they saw as little more than its own preservation. And from it, of course, the young drew back. What they wanted was warmth and love and welcome and inspiration—Christ as the lodestar of their lives, Christ coming into their hearts. What they got was so often a set of doctrinal and moral formulae to be believed in without understanding, and pious practices, which seemed to them, deep down, as unrelated to the real business of living as they were to the man in the moon. The list could go on forever. I see no point in letting it grow. Within it, as presented, there may be exaggeration. There is certainly enough that is true to give those who have the integrity to do so, furiously to think.

### *A Finishing School for Young Ladies*

At this juncture, an example will not be out of place. I remember a finishing school for young ladies—mostly from rich South American families—on a West Indian island. Everything about the place was very lush, including some of the young ladies themselves. I had to talk to them—for half an hour—then hurry off almost immediately afterwards to talk again, some miles away, to a group of cane cutters, who are much more my cup of tea. My talk over to the French Reverend Mother, a sturdy little Breton woman, drew me aside and said, "Father, I don't know what to do. Here, at this school, we give the girls everything—Mass every morning, Benediction twice a week, devotions". I looked out from the angle in the corridor where we had paused to speak (I had to hurry to my cane cutters) and there was the statue of a saint, massed round with candles and potted plants, every two yards of its length. The Reverend Mother came to her crunch point. "All this", she said, "and within weeks of leaving this Establishment, they're away with a boy in bed". I looked at her and said, "Mother, I must get to my cane cutters. May I be blunt and straight?" She was a Breton

"Yes, Father", she said, "as straight as you like". I thanked her. "Here in this Establishment, Mother, you are not giving these girls the Faith. You are wrapping them round in a set of formulae. These, for them are part of school life. They mean nothing, really, where the girls are concerned. They are a matter of routine. When they leave school, they drop the formulae in much the same way as they drop all the other school rules, and get on with the business of living, with what they think of as having a good time. And why not? What we have to show them and what we have failed signally to show them is that only in Christ can they have a time that is really good. Here, in this Establishment, you have given them everything but Christ; an apparatus to attend on instead of a Person, an empty shell devoid of love. Is it strange that, wanting to love, they should seek it outside their religion which, for them as they have been taught it, has not an atom of love in it; all it has, as they see it, is a series of don'ts unrelated to their lives and nothing more"? I had to go on my way. We became firm friends from that moment. And this was long before Vatican II. The Church was losing the young, without ever knowing it, long before that Council was ever called. The Church did not know this because the young in those days still conformed outwardly in the matter of religious practice, though their minds were miles away from it. But they still want to love. That is why so many so tragically regard the Church as a hindrance rather than a help in this regard.

### *Project for South America*

Another example comes to mind. On one of my trips to the United States I was called in by an American Jesuit provincial and his Consultors to offer some advice with regard to a project they had been asked to take up in South America, in the form of what we would call in England a public school. I told them at once not to touch it with a large pole; then found myself immediately in great difficulty when I had to explain to them exactly what I meant by that expression! Eventually I succeeded, then went on to give my reasons. "Presumably", I said, "the school you propose to build will be expensive and for the boys of

well-to-do parents". They agreed. "Further", I remarked "and as it seems to me, there will be little point in putting it up unless you propose to teach the boys—in what we would call in England the fifth and sixth forms—something of the Church's social teaching". They agreed. "I am afraid you will not succeed", I said, "and for this reason". I went on, "Let us suppose that the Father who does this teaching—as part, say, of a good course of religious instruction—comes to the question of the family living wage and points out the obligations of employers and wealthy land-owners in this matter. After he has laid emphasis on it, I feel very sure that, shall we say, Jose-Maria Santos will write home and tell his Father that Communism is being taught in the class-room. His Father, along with others, will then call on the Rector and it will be made plain that unless the Father who is teaching the social doctrine of the Church, stops his subversive talk, as it will be called, there will be a withdrawal of students, funds and fees. The Rector will be faced with the failure of the enterprise over which he presides or moving on his Jesuit teacher of social doctrine. I fear he will choose the latter course; which means that the building of the school will have been of no value whatsoever. For what is the purpose of a Catholic school if it does not teach the unvarnished truth of the Catholic religion?" I advised the Provincial and his Consultors instead to send two or three men to start a credit-union movement in the rural countryside of the country concerned and, if possible, a few more men into the factory areas of the cities where they could be amongst the workers and the poor. This, if I remember rightly, was fifteen years ago. I recall it to memory here by way of illustration that temporal entanglement means, in fact, that Christ in His wholeness cannot be proclaimed, least of all to the poor.

### *A Question for Traditionalists*

All this was in the first stage of Vatican II. The world was still that of the pre-conciliar Church, which seems light-years away to many today. Let me turn now for a moment to those Traditionalists within the Church, who want the Church back, *exactly as it was* in that pre-

conciliar world. Along with Traditionalists in general, they are concerned rightly with the retention and, where necessary, the reinstatement of traditional doctrine; and with practice—liturgical, devotional and otherwise—as *expressive of that true doctrine*. In this they are right and in this they have and always will have my total support. But the question at issue in this article is not here. It is not whether they are concerned with the integrity of doctrine, but whether this is their *sole* concern; whether they are concerned with doctrine, *whilst taking for granted without question* everything else that went with the pre-conciliar Church and which some of them assume as returning automatically and exactly as it was when true doctrine is restored—the mores, modes, manners and all, as they were in the Church in pre-conciliar days. This I would not have at any price and for one simple reason. It is this: the pre-conciliar Church had long since lost the young and the poor because it never succeeded in giving them as it should Christ whole and entire, as one longing to come into the intimacy of their personal lives. Here it held back, as it was bound to hold back, because of its alignment over the years with an Establishment dominated by middle and upper-class, secularist values, which pervaded its clergy and religious, bidding them conform to those values in order that its institutional position might be preserved and its supposed safety thereby ensured. The price it paid long since for this capitulation in the interests of temporal alignment was the loss of the young and the poor. Years before the convocation of Vatican II a whole world was in process of passing it by. Concern with its institutional position, reliance on men and an Establishment made by men, robbed the Church of its spiritual strength; its ability to share Christ, along with all that Christ meant, with the young, particularly, and the poor. Total reliance on Christ, the following of Him irrespective of the consequences, alone enables her to do this. What the young and the poor got for many long, pre-conciliar years was an alien Christ, Christ encrusted with secular and middle-class values by clergy and religious brought up to accept those values. So, the young and the poor turned from that encrusted Christ. Do not blame them.

## *Henry and his Friends*

Last April, one of my past students from Claver House, a young African from Togo now studying in France, came to spend a few days with me. He keeps himself busy working over week-ends as a night-watchman. He was worried that he could not get to Mass on Sundays and mentioned his worry to a friend, who invited him there and then to come to a weekly Mass that was said each Tuesday for a group of about thirty students not far away. Henry, my past student, accepted this kind offer and found himself at once amongst fellow-Catholics and friends. He became a member of this informal group of young student friends who apart from coming together for Mass on a Tuesday, met regularly during the week. "What do you do at your meetings?" I asked him. "We have discussions". "Of what?" "On the Gospels", he said, "to get to know Christ". Then added, "And often we pray together". I was moved and I was happy. This was good news indeed. "I am getting to know my Faith", he said, "as I never knew it before. It used to mean very little to me. I went to Church on a Sunday out of custom and that was it; but now it is different". Christ, in other words, was coming into his heart or, as Newman would have it, his belief in his Catholic religion was no longer notional or academic but real and meaningful. Christ was touching his life. Henry went on to add that he had gone off some months before with other friends in their twenties to make a Retreat. "Three days?", I asked. "No, eight", was the somewhat astonishing reply, "and it was a marvellous experience, simply marvellous". I had another question, "Are there many groups like yours in France?" Plenty, he replied—informal, within the Church, not imposed or organised from the top; the result, so to say, of spontaneous generation from the young at the grass-roots, anxious always to have a priest to say Mass for them and be with them, not as an official appointee, but simply as a friend. What, I said to myself, could be better than this? If this is the reality underlying the appalling confusion within the French Church, if this is the story, as it is today, then there is great ground for hope.

I had a final question for Henry: "Are you and your friends interested", I asked, "in the present dispute between



progressives and Traditionalists in France?" "No", he answered, "not really". In other words, where these young students were concerned, the contemporary battle was irrelevant. I am not saying that they were correct in this. All I am interested in pointing out is their attitude to that which rightly causes great concern to many who read this review. What they wanted was Christ within the framework of their Faith. This is what they were after. The point that is significant within the context of this article is that what they were unable to see was how the present dispute within the Church was in any way relevant to what they were after. So far as they were concerned, it was something over their heads, divorced from the reality of their lives; or, to alter the metaphor, an upper-class brawl on an off-shore island, divorced from the reality of Christian living as they, rightly or wrongly, understood it. I think myself that they understood it rightly and that what Henry was telling me was that, as the students saw it, the pre-conciliar Church had not reached them and they saw no evidence that the post-conciliar Church was doing so better or would do so.

### *Doctrine and Stance*

I came out of that conversation mentally sobered up and somewhat shaken. There was exaggeration, if you like, in what Henry said, for doctrine *is* all important and those must be fought who would tamper with its purity. But the *stance* — the modes, the manners and the rigidities — that accompanied too often the presentation of true doctrine for years in the pre-conciliar Church was such as to repel Christ from, not draw Him into the intimacy of individual Christian lives, especially those, as I have said so often, of the young and the poor. Christ with reservations is what they got. What they did not get was what they had to have, almost in spite of themselves—Christ without reserve and irrespective of the consequences His coming would bring. Thus it was that a world was lost. This is what linkage with the prevailing Establishment for the preservation of its institutional position and the social conformism that followed on the heels of that linkage did for the pre-conciliar Church and its message. This, I believe, is what Henry

and his young friends and thousands like them sense and see. This is why they regard the present dispute within the Church as without significance for their lives; over their heads, divorced from the true reality which, for them, is Christ. It is precisely this need—to bring Christ without reserve, the whole Christ, into the intimacy of men's lives—that the pre-conciliar Church failed to meet. It is precisely this need that the Traditionalist-Progressive dispute within the Church, however necessary in itself, serves only to obscure. Hence the gap between doctrine and its practical expression; and the gap grows as the dispute proceeds. Hence the illogical, but understandable conclusion drawn by many of the young, that doctrine is irrelevant or, at best, that some of them would have it, that the Church is a hindrance rather than a help to their love of Christ. Out of this comes a most valid conclusion, which all should take to heart. It is that concern with doctrine *alone*, however necessary and indeed, meritorious in itself, will *not* bring men to Christ or Christ to men. Doctrine must be so expressed in living practice that, in it, Christ comes to men without reserve and irrespective of what the consequences may be.

### *A Question for Progressives*

If the pre-conciliar Church of so many Traditionalists was incapable of this because of the rigidities that accompanied its stance, what then of the post-conciliar Church with its flexibilities and openness, as favoured by so many Progressives. The answer is not, I think, difficult. It has failed by the same count as its pre-conciliar counterpart. It has misread totally the signs of the times, mistaken the aching need in men's hearts; which is for Christ deep in their lives, whatever their surface chat may be. What they have been given instead is sweeping, rootless and rapid change—liturgical, structural and so on—at the top and imposed by the top, which is as relevant to a man's need for Christ in his heart as a change of hats on his head is to the hunger in his belly. Progressives sin by the same count as Traditionalists, who would go back to the stance of the Church's pre-conciliar past, exactly as it was. Both have their eyes on *position*; on alignment with the secular in the interests of preserving the Institutional Church and its

supernatural message—not through dependence on God alone, but through dependence on temporal power embodied in the Establishment of today or tomorrow. For the Right within the Church, this means alignment with the middle-class Establishment as it was: for the Left, it means alignment with the workers' collectivist Establishment as they think it will be. For both Right and Left—Traditionalist and Progressive—this means, once again, the substitution of the politics of manoeuvre for the pursuit of Christ; the sterility of diplomacy for the richness of Grace. The clouding of the true issue, in consequence, with a mass of material irrelevancies. As a young friend of mine put it to me not long ago in a letter; "What we should at least instil, or recognise first and foremost, is that the substance, the existence of our being is not being revealed to men. The sea of change has swept away Christ the son of God, the Revealer of truth, from the sight of mankind. We have been slackened, blinded and divided and the Institution of Christ, which is the Catholic Church, accepts it and white-washes the facade".

Henry and his friends are right. We neglect their message to our peril.

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## THE FORGOTTEN FACTOR

The series of four articles at present running in *Christian Order* under the above title is available in cassette form from the Sole Supplier: C. V. Productions, 48 Cambridge Road, Wigmore, Gillingham, Kent, U.K. Phone Medway 634-33168. Titles and prices as follows. Quote numbers with order please:

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With perception and wit the late Archbishop Robert J. Dwyer rightly makes mock of the man-centered religion which so many in the Church are preaching and teaching today as a substitute for the true Faith given by Christ to the Catholic Church. That Faith is God-centered or it is nothing.

## Why not Canonize Rousseau?

ARCHBISHOP ROBERT J. DWYER

SOME years ago, letting cheerfulness for the nonce break through the carapace of our habitual gloom, we proposed that the Church canonize Jean-Jacques Rousseau. It would, as we suggested, regularize a situation in which his philosophy has been accepted by all forward-looking Catholics while the man himself is refused, not merely a halo, but the minimal title of respectability. Now it is true that according to the traditional canons (no doubt obsolescent) Jean-Jacques would have his work cut out for him in qualifying for the honors of the altar.

He was, to put it bluntly, a trifle loose in the matter of sexual morality, holding the bond of marriage, seemingly in low esteem. He was something less than honest and honorable in his dealings with his fellows, and if he entertained a few vague notions about Christianity and the duty of observing the law of God, he rarely allowed himself to lose any sleep over them.

### *Gung-Ho*

Far be it from us, however, to trespass on the preserve of the Devil's Advocate and point out all the reasons why Rousseau should *not* be awarded the supreme accolade of sainthood. We are all gung-ho for scrapping the canon and by-passing the lumbering operations of the Sacred Congregation. For if we owe to him the clearest modern exposition of the philosophy we have all adopted (all of us, the

who are really smart and progressive), surely a few minor peccadilloes might easily be overlooked.

After all, the Church did not hesitate to canonize Rousseau's great adversary, St. Augustine, in spite of the fact that he confessed, first of all, to stealing apples when a boy, and secondly, to keeping a mistress when he was growing up, though this was prior to his conversion to more puritanic ways under the dour influence of St. Ambrose.

## *ables*

For Rousseau, we can never leave off reminding ourselves, reawakened man to the dynamism of his own perfectibility. Leaving behind such nonsense fables as Original Man and its fell consequences of darkened intellect and weakened will, he declared roundly that Man is Good, good all the way through. You're all right, Jack, said he to humanity; all that is wrong with you is that you have allowed yourself to listen to the prophets of doom who have preached your sinfulness, your corruption, and you have stood like a great block of wood while ambitious enemies of the race fastened gyves on you, binding you hand and foot, foisting on you iniquitous political and social systems, and inventing a religious mythology of fear and self-discipline, to make you walk the straight and narrow, looking neither to right or left to see the green fields and flowery meads where a benign Creator intended you should frolic to your heart's content.

Throw off your bonds, then, Jack, turn on your oppressors, unmask their criminal machinations, proclaim your declaration of independence. The only thing you have to fear is fear itself. Face up to the fact that you have it in you to be the Perfect Man, or if that ultimate perfection (if there be such a thing) must await the slow revelation of the evolutionary process, then to be at least the Perfectible Man, moving majestically up the highway to the skies. This is the philosophy that every truly enlightened Catholic of the post-Vatican II era has acclaimed and adopted as his own. He has renounced those ancient superstitions of sin and human weakness, of the necessity of grace and self-discipline. The fall of our First Parents (again, if there ever was such a thing outside a fairy tale),



has nothing to do with him. This, incidentally, comforts away with the embarrassment of the doctrine of Redemption: we simply don't need it.

We are born creatures of infinite potential, hampered only by the prejudices of our elders and by society striving to put us into the straitjacket of conformity. And the Church, God forgive her, has characteristically played a despicable role in aiding and abetting these wrongs, presenting to our malleable minds such abstruse and probably harmful concepts as the existence of God, the Divinity of Christ, and the whole complicated and irrational apparatus of the creed.

How wrong this is, how utterly to be reprobated! Let Jack alone; let him mature as he will, not as you will or his parents will or society wills. And if he happens to make a few mistakes along the way, twisting his cat's tail, torturing his dog, putting out his playmate's eye, jumping on his mother, committing mayhem and murder, well, that's part of the process of growing up to be the Perfect Man.

### *Practical*

So, inasmuch as we are very practical folk, conscientious and intent with all due seriousness, we have hastened to put our Rousseauism to work. We have studied our *Emile*, our *Confessions*, our *Contrat Social*, and we have applied this new revelation to our schools and our seminaries, among other things with childlike trust and utter faith. Discipline, the Master tells us, is bad for boys and girls.

Let discipline be banished forthwith! The slightest restraint on sexual permissiveness is to be abominated as stultifying the spirit and retarding maturity? Then by all means let parietals be done away with and all the sad nonsense of separate dormitories on our campuses.

### *Not Held Down*

Young men studying for the priesthood must not be held down in developing their individual personalities, never constrained to attend Mass or the spiritual exercises, and if they have a taste for dating, let them be encouraged rather than hindered. Else you will thwart their budding selves.

and spoil their careless rapture; else you will prevent the maturing of the Perfect Priest for the Church of Tomorrow.

### *Disappointing*

So here we are, all good Rousseauists together, waiting with him to see the dawn break o'er yon high eastward hill, for the Perfect Man of the Future to make his debut and begin to change this dismal old world into something rich and rare. Reluctantly, it must be admitted that the results so far have been just a trifle disappointing.

The perfect graduates of our colleges seem perversely prone to react against the kind of education they have received, even to resent it; others, alas, rather than addressing themselves to the great work at hand, leading humanity to the path of perfectibility toward that Omega Point somewhere just over the horizon, seem to prefer gambolling in the greensward all the livelong day and frolicking in the attic hay.

And too many of our young levites, reared in the bracing atmosphere of absolute self-determination, seem much more interested in doing their own thing than in heading the van toward the realization of the New Church. Some, indeed, seem to have lost interest in the Church altogether, New or Old. Something wrong here. Doubtless it is the residue of prejudice, obscurantism, all the incubus of orthodoxy. Until these be purged, the leaven will not transform the dough.

### *Impossible*

For it is unthinkable, inconceivable, impossible, that our beloved Jean-Jacques Rousseau could be wrong, could be a false prophet. Perish such a thought! Why, he's as good as a saint, any day.

# Any Questions ?

WILLIAM LAWSON, S.J.

**In your "Answer" (January, 1978) you say that acceptance of the New Rite has confirmed its validity. The laity were never consulted, but were faced with *fait accompli*. What sort of acceptance is that ?**

Neither laity nor priests were consulted. At the 1968 Synod, the bishops were invited to be present at a Normative Mass. The majority disapproved of it wholly or in part. Their disapproval was disregarded, and the New Rite was prescribed for the whole Church. We were "presented", you say, "with a *fait accompli*".

But that does not preclude acceptance. Whether they liked it or not, bishops and priests in the main adopted the New Rite as valid. Since its validity has been questioned by most of the bishops and priests have continued to acknowledge its validity; and that is a very strong witness to validity, as bishops and priests must account to God for the performance of their duty to perpetuate the Sacrifice of the Cross in their offering of the Mass. It is they who either know, or are capable of finding out, the presence or absence of the essential constituents of a sacrament—matter, form, and intention; and it is reasonable to attribute honesty and sincerity to their judgement. Had the laity been consulted they could have said they liked or disliked the New Rite, but how many of them would have given a thought to its validity? Or, if they had had doubts, how many could have resolved them without asking their priests and bishops. Some laymen are exceptionally good theologians, better perhaps than most priests; but their judgement would be that of specialists, not of the faithful in general.

However, though the validity of the New Rite be accepted, it is not above serious criticism which deserves to be seriously considered.

**Does Our Lord's promise that "the gates of Hell shall not prevail against His Church" mean that Satan will never be able to draw the majority of catholics into apostasy ?**

It means that there will always be a Catholic Church. That is absolutely certain. How big that One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church will be is not the least bit certain. We are accustomed, perhaps, to think of the Church as readily expanding, and growing all the time in holiness. Now our customary optimism has been shattered. We can see for ourselves that the Church is shrinking: young people are leaving the Church before they have left school; their elders pick and choose among the Church's firm doctrines on faith and morals ( and that kind of choosing is the definition of heresy); nearly all religious orders are dwindling for lack of recruits and by the departure of professed members; vocations to the priesthood have fallen off catastrophically; and the flood of converts has become a trickle.

Satan was once and for all defeated by Our Lord's death on the Cross. But the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church, has to make that victory her own by the personal verification of it in each of her members. Satan continues to fight furiously and savagely to save something from his defeat; Our Lord's Adversary is now the Adversary of the Church, and the Church must fight to the end of time, using the means her Head has given her, above all the Mass, which is the re-enactment of the Sacrifice by which Christ triumphed. The prophecies in the Apocalypse show the struggle being waged throughout history, with the Devil scoring notable successes; witness the great heresies (such as Arianism which emptied the Mass of its divine reality by denying the divinity of Christ), the Eastern Schism, the Great Schism of the West, the apostasy of whole nations, England included, at the Reformation, the corruption introduced by liberalism. What will our place be in that history? Whatever it is, each of us, with God's grace, must so live that when Christ comes He will find faith in us, and us in His Church.



# Book Review

## SACRIFICE AND SACRAMENT

**The First "R", Part II.** Let us proclaim the Mysteries of Faith. For parents and teachers and the concerned. *The Three-Fold Eucharist* by Guy Brinkworth, S.J., PSR Press, Convent of Mercy, Fishguard, Dyfed, S. Wales SA6 9DU; 30p.

After reading this second part of *The First "R"* I went back to the Introduction, to comfort myself with the knowledge that Parts I and II are just the beginning of a series. We can count on further instructive and inspiring presentations of the mysteries of our Faith by Fr. Brinkworth and we can hope that, if they have the circulation they deserve, many parents and teachers, and even more children, will be greatly helped to know, love and live that Faith.

Fr. Brinkworth, true to the mind of the Church, has chosen for his first subject, after outlining his plan in Part I, the central mystery of our salvation history, the sacramental Sacrifice and the sacrificial Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Without the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Blessed Sacrament there would be no Catholic Church. As the Catholic Church, according to Our Lord's promise, indestructible, there will always be the Sacrifice and Sacrament preserved in it. But the Church, in her time, has suffered catastrophic losses, and those who left her did not always, like the Eastern Church, preserve the Mass. For the Arians who denied the divinity of Christ the Mass was meaningless. The Reformation has robbed whole countries of the Mass for centuries. In our own day the Church's boundaries are receding; and of the people who are still nominally Catholics not more than 40% bother to go to Sunday Mass. What is needed is not gimmicks to make the Mass superficially "entertaining" but a heartfelt knowledge of the sacredness of the Mass as our central act of worship and the renewal of Our Lord's supreme sacrifice for our salvation.

Fr. Brinkworth expounds our Faith simply, clearly, and with the infective force of his own conviction. He explains



meaning of sacrifice, and shows how Our Lord's sacrifice is the reality symbolized and prophesied in "the sacrifice of our father Abraham". He demonstrates the essential identity of the Blessed Sacrament, which Our Lord instituted at the Last Supper, and the Sacrifice on the Cross which it anticipated; and similarly the identity of the Mass with that unique Sacrifice.

The second element in what he aptly calls "the three-fold charist" is Holy Communion—which would be no more than a symbolic (and material) meal if it were not a real offering in an accomplished Sacrifice. The third element is Our Lord's abiding Real Presence, to be worshipped in our tabernacles.

The Council's recommendation that the faithful should participate "actively" in the Mass has been followed in very different ways. Fr. Brinkworth's note on page 27 is a valuable reminder of the Council's Latin word which has been translated as "active", and a sure guide to what the Council meant "participation" to be.

Attendance at Mass, like membership of the Church, will continue to fall off unless we ourselves take to heart, and teach our children, that we need salvation, that it was achieved for us by the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, that by His grace we have to make it our own, and that His Sacrifice, the supreme work of our Redemption, is really present to us in the Mass.

There is no Catholic who could not be illuminated and enriched in faith and sincerity by reading this admirable booklet.

*William Lawson, S.J.*

# APE-MEN—FACT OR FALLACY?

by M. Bowden

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A critical examination of the evidence with thought provoking results that are disturbing in their implications.

## Summary of Contents

**PILTDOWN.** The considerable body of little publicized evidence which indicates that the most likely suspect for the forgery is Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.

**APE-MEN 'EVIDENCE'.** The very speculative nature of the evidence for 'ape-men', and the presumptuous way in which this is presented.

**EARLY HOMO SAPIENS.** Their existence in deeper strata than those of 'ape-men'. The Superficial reasons given by the experts for their rejection.

**PEKIN MAN.** A 25 ft. high ash heap, bone tools and other evidence of human habitation of the site virtually suppressed by the experts in China. Details of the discovery of human skeletons delayed for five years. Ape-like skulls reconstructed with human features. In estimation of the disappearance of the fossils at the time of Pearl Harbour suggests that they were found by the Japanese and passed to the Americans after the war, only to disappear again.

**JAVA MAN.** Dubois's concealment of human skulls for thirty years. The faking of scientific illustrations by Dubois's supporter, Professor Haeckel. The strange circumstances of the discovery of further fossil 'evidence' of Java man.

**NEANDERTHAL MAN.** The evidence that these were true men suffering from rickets, arthritis and syphilis.

**THE AFRICAN APE-'MEN'.** The admission by several experts that all these fossils are simply apes with no real human features.

**CONCLUSION.** An examination of the original reports on the 'ape-men' fossil fragments highlights the questionable circumstances of their discovery, and shows that the 'missing links' are unscientific conjectures.

It becomes clear that **not one** of the many fossils discovered can be accepted as providing any evidence for links between man and the animal kingdom.